MANUAL

and

CONSTITUTION

of the

ORDER OF SAINT VINCENT

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Order of St. Vincent

RULES

I. To pray to God every day.

II. If physically possible, to be present at the Holy Eucharist every Sunday.

III. To make due preparation before serving and to say the prayer of the Order.

IV. To serve in strict accordance with the desires of the Priest whom I may be assisting, irrespective of my own inclination.

V. To receive the Holy Communion, after due preparation, at least monthly and on Christmas Day, Easter, Whitsunday, and within the Octave of St. Vincent's Day.

VI. To render loyal obedience to my ecclesiastical superiors.

VII. To obey diligently the rules of any parochial organization of which I may be a member.

VIII. Always to speak reverently of Holy things.

THE Rules of the Order of St. Vincent as set forth in this Manual are to be considered as a minimum requirement for membership. Each Chapter may provide such additional rules as its local use may require.

Any chapter so desiring is permitted to retain its original name used prior to affiliation with the Order. *e.g.* "_____ Chapter (or Guild) of the Order of St. Vincent."

✠

The Office

V.✠In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

R. Amen.

Our Father

V. O God, make speed to save us.

R. O Lord, make haste to help us.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Alleluia.

Ant.: I was glad when they said unto me: we will go into the house of the Lord.

PSALM LXXXIV.

Quam dilecta

O HOW amiable are thy dwellings: thou Lord of hosts!

My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house, and the swallow a nest, where she may lay her young: even thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.

Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be alway praising thee.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee: in whose heart are thy ways.

Who going through the vale of misery use it for a well: and the pools are filled with water.

They will go from strength to strength: and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Sion.

O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer: hearken, O God of Jacob.

Behold, O God our defender: and look upon the face of thine anointed.

For one day in thy courts: is better than a thousand.

I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God: than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness.

For the Lord God is a light and defence: the Lord will give grace and worship, and no good thing shall he withhold from them that live a godly life.

O Lord God of hosts: blessed is the man that putteth his trust in thee.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was the beginning, is now and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Ant.: I was glad when they said unto me: we will go into the house of the Lord.

THE CHAPTER

Rev. vii., 13-15

AND one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they? and I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said unto me: These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the Throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His Temple: and He that sitteth on the Throne shall dwell among them.

R. Thanks be to God.

HYMN

Christi Miles Gloriosus

Lo, for Christ the deacon Vincent
Warreth in a glorious strife,
And with bold and willing footstep
Mounts the pyre with tortures rife,
While his salt-besprinkled body
Crackling flames bereave of life.

Fierce from glowing embers quicken'd
By the Martyr's blood, they rise,
Yet, as God's unflinching servant,
He endures in dauntless wise,
Unto Christ in supplication
Turning with uplifted eyes.

Glory be to God, and honour
In the highest, as is meet;
To the Son, as to the Father,
And the glorious Paraclete,
Whose all-boundless praise and power
Endless ages shall repeat. Amen.

V. Lord, let my prayer be set forth.
R. In thy sight as the incense.
Ant.: I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever.

THE SONG OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

Magnificat anima mea

My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded: the lowliness of his hand-maiden.
For behold, from henceforth: all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me: and holy is his Name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him: throughout all generations.
He hath showed strength with his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel: as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, forever.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.
Ant.: I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY GOD, grant unto us, Thy servants, so to follow Thy Blessed Martyr Vincent in all purity and constancy of living: that, bearing witness to Thee upon earth, we may attain the palm of everlasting glory: through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

ALMIGHTY GOD, Who hast called us Thy servants to the sacred office of Acolyte in Thy Church, that clothed in white we may minister before Thee; we pray Thee of Thy great mercy to guide, strengthen and sanctify us by Thy Holy Spirit, that always doing Thy will, we may, both by our service in Thy House and by our daily life, please Thee and glorify Thy Name. *Amen.*

O ALMIGHTY GOD, to whom Samuel ministered before Eli the priest, girded with a linen ephod; grant to us Thy servants the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, that, like him, we may minister before Thee with a loving heart and due reverence: through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

¶ *Here shall follow the admission of Candidates, if there be any; and the Office shall always end with this Memorial.*

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

Ant.: O Sacred Banquet in which Christ is received: the memory of His Passion is renewed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given unto us (Alleluia).

V. Thou gavest them Bread from Heaven.

R. Containing in itself all sweetness.

Let us pray.

O God, Who, in the Wonderful Sacrament of the Altar, has left unto us a perpetual Memorial of Thy Passion: grant us, we beseech Thee, so to venerate the Sacred Mysteries of Thy Body and Blood that we may evermore perceive within ourselves the fruit of Thy Redemption: Who livest and reignest with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

V. Let us bless the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

The Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always. *Amen.*

ADDRESS.

Prayer of the Order

ALMIGHTY GOD, who hast called *us* Thy servants to the Sacred office of Acolyte in Thy Church, that clothed in white *we* may minister before Thee, *we* pray Thee of Thy great mercy to guide, strengthen, and sanctify *us* by Thy Holy Spirit, that, always doing Thy will, *we* may both by *our* service in Thy House and by *our* daily life please Thee and glorify Thy name; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

Form of Admission

Veni Creator

¶ *Then shall the Candidate, vested in a cassock, be brought forward by the Warden, who shall say:*

Reverend Father, I present unto thee this person to be admitted an Acolyte and member of the Order of St. Vincent.

Priest. My Son, what is thy desire?

Answer. I desire to be admitted an Acolyte and to be received in the Order of St. Vincent, that I may share in the devotions and good works of its members.

Priest. Wilt thou endeavor faithfully to fulfill thy duties as an Acolyte?

Answer. I will endeavor so to do.

Priest. Dost thou promise to conform to the rules of the Order so long as thou shalt continue a member of it?

Answer. I do.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Our Father.

V. O Lord, save Thy servant.
R. Who putteth his trust in Thee.
V. Send him help from Thy Holy Place.
R. And evermore mightily defend him.
V. Let the enemy have no advantage over him.
R. Nor the wicked approach to hurt him.
V. Lord, hear our prayer.
R. And let our cry come unto Thee.
V. The Lord be with you.
R. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

GIVE ear, O Lord, to our prayers and vouchsafe to bless this Thy servant, whom we are about to receive in Thy Holy Name to a share in all spiritual blessings and to the companionship of the Order of Saint Vincent, and grant that by Thy grace he may lead a godly life in Thy Church, advancing in holiness, and, assisted by the prayers of this Order, may obtain everlasting life: through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ *Then, turning to the Candidate, he shall say:*

I admit thee to be an Acolyte in this Parish of in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

¶ *Then, putting the surplice on him, he shall add:*

I clothe thee in the white garment of the surplice; see that thou serve God with such reverence and devotion, that thou mayest hereafter be admitted into the ranks of those who, having washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, stand before the Throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His Temple.

¶ *Then, turning to the Altar, on which the medal of the Order is laid, he shall say:*

V. Our help is in the Name of the Lord.
R. Who hath made heaven and earth.
V. The Lord be with you.
R. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

O God, Creator, Preserver, Saviour of mankind, Bestower of Salvation and Giver of spiritual grace, send down Thy bless✠ing upon this medal, that whoso wears it, fortified with heavenly might, may preserve unblemished

faith, steadfast hope and fervent charity, and never be parted from Thee, who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen.

¶ *Then, turning to the Candidate, he shall say:*

I receive and admit thee into the fellowship of the Order of Saint Vincent, and to a share in all its privileges and duties, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Receive this medal in token of thy membership in the Order of Saint Vincent, making thy prayer to our Lord Jesus Christ, that by His merits thou mayest bear it without reproach, and may He guard thee from all adversity and bring thee to everlasting life. Amen.

¶ *Then shall the priest sign him with the sign of the Cross, saying:*

Almighty God, the Creator of heaven and earth, Who hath vouchsafed to lead thee into this company and fellowship, bless ✠ and strengthen thee, that thou mayest tread under foot the head of the serpent, thine enemy, and at length victoriously attain the palm and crown of thine everlasting inheritance, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ant.: I will go unto the altar of God: even unto the God of my joy and gladness.

PSALM XLIII.

Judica Me

GIVE sentence with me, O God, and defend my cause against the ungodly people: O deliver me from the deceitful and wicked man.

For thou art the God of my strength; why hast thou put me from thee: and why go I so heavily while the enemy oppresseth me?

O send out thy light and thy truth that they may lead me: and bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy dwelling.

And that I may go unto the altar of God, even unto the God of my joy and gladness: and upon the harp will I give thanks unto thee, O God, my God.

Why art thou so heavy, O my soul: and why art thou so disquieted within me?

O put thy trust in God for I will yet give him thanks which is the help of my countenance, and my God.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Ant.: I will go unto the altar of God: even unto the God of my joy and gladness.

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

ORDER *of* SAINT VINCENT

(NATIONAL GUILD FOR ACOLYTES)

ARTICLES

I.

This organization is a voluntary association and shall be called the *Order of Saint Vincent.*

II.

The motto of the Order shall be: *Amori Christi et Ecclesiae.* "For the love of Christ and His Church."

III.

The objects of the Order shall be:

1. To promote holy living amongst its members.

2. To promote loyal obedience to ecclesiastical superiors.

3. To encourage more frequent attendance at the Holy Eucharist, and more careful preparation for its reception.

4. To promote friendship and brotherhood amongst servers.

IV.

Membership:

1. Any lay male communicants of the Episcopal Church, or of any church in communion with her, who serve at her Altars, who act as Crucifers, as Lay Readers, or otherwise assist her Priests in the Sanctuary and who will subscribe and assent to the Articles and Rules of the Order in the manner hereinafter provided, and who shall have been approved for membership by a Priest of the Church, shall be qualified for membership.

2. A member ceasing active duty as a server, or one who has been active as a server, may be enrolled as an Associate Member upon application to the Secretary-General. An Associate Member shall be subject to the same rules as active members.

3. Any Bishop, Priest, Deacon, or Layman of the Church in good standing may become a Bishop, Priest, Deacon, or Lay Associate. Clerical Associates will be Honorary Members; but Lay Associates shall have been active members of the Order, and shall be subject to the same rules as active members. The Council, however, may by unanimous vote, elect any Bishop, Priest, Deacon, or Layman as an

Honorary Associate of the Order, but the distinction shall remain between Lay Associates and Honorary Lay Associates.

V.

Officers:

1. The officers shall be a Director-General, an Honorary Chaplain-General, and a Secretary-General and Treasurer.

2. Director-General. The Director-General shall be a Priest and a member of the Council, and shall be elected by the Council from the Priests who shall be members thereof. The Director-General shall be elected at the meeting of the Council held during the Octave of the Feast of St. Vincent, and shall hold office for one year, or until his successor shall be elected and qualified.

3. Honorary Chaplain-General. The Honorary Chaplain-General shall be a Bishop of the Church who shall be elected by the members of the Council. The Honorary Chaplain-General shall be elected by the Council at its meeting during the Octave of the Feast of St. Vincent and shall hold office for one year, or until his successor shall be elected and qualified.

4. Secretary-General and Treasurer. The Secretary-General and Treasurer shall be a

lay communicant of the Episcopal Church but need not be otherwise a member of the Order. The Secretary-General and Treasurer shall be elected by the Council at a meeting during the Octave of the Feast of St. Vincent, and shall hold office for three years, or until his successor shall be elected and qualified. The Secretary-General and Treasurer shall give notice of all meetings of the Council and shall issue all authorized notices to members. He shall conduct the correspondence and keep a true record of all meetings of the Council, and shall have custody of the Constitution and all other documents and papers belonging to the Order. The Secretary-General and Treasurer shall collect all moneys due to the Order and shall disburse the same under the direction of the Council; shall keep accurate accounts of all receipts and disbursements, and, at the meeting of the Council held during the Octave of the Feast of St. Vincent in each year, shall submit a final account which shall be audited under the direction of a committee of the Council to be appointed by the Director-General.

5. Council. There shall be a Council of ten members, five Priests and five Laymen, (not including the Secretary-General, who shall be ex-officio a member of the Council). The members of the Council shall be elected for

two years, and shall serve until their successors have been elected or appointed. The election shall take place at the regular annual meeting of the Council, but in the event of a resignation, the Director-General shall have power to appoint a successor, subject to the confirmation (which may be made in writing) of the other members of the Council. A Priest becoming a Bishop shall automatically resign, and become a Bishop-Associate. The failure of a Council member to respond to the calls of the Council shall be sufficient cause for the Council to declare his office vacant, and to proceed to fill it. Those elected must be active members or Associates of the Order.

VI.

Powers of the Council:

The Council shall have power:

1. To fix the time and place for meetings of the Council which shall, unless otherwise appointed, be held during the Octave of the Feast of St. Vincent in every year. Members of the Council may vote at meetings by written proxy given to other members of the Council.

2. To govern the Order in general and to amend the Constitution, and to do any other thing necessary fully to effect the purposes and work of the Order.

3. To authorize Parochial, Diocesan or Provincial Chapters of the Order with proper officers, if the need for the same shall become evident.

4. To sanction an Office to be said or sung at all meetings of the Order, General or Parochial, but another Office may be used locally upon approval of the Council.

VII.

Provincial or Diocesan Chapters:

Provincial or Diocesan Chapters with proper officers may be organized. The officers must be members of the Order and shall be known as Provincial or Diocesan Chaplain and Secretary and Treasurer. They shall be appointed by the Council for one year, or until their successors are appointed. Local conditions shall regulate Provincial or Diocesan Chapters, but their organization and methods shall be as simple as possible. They shall be responsible for their own financial obligations, and in no instance shall the Council be held responsible for any of their financial obligations. Where there is a Provincial or Diocesan Chapter, the Chaplain shall make an annual report, and shall be responsible for the annual reports of the Parochial Chapters; officiate at institution, admission and other services if requested; encourage Acolyte Festivals, and other gatherings such as

retreats, quiet hours and days; and generally forward the work of the Order.

VIII.

Dues:

1. The annual dues for all members, active and associate, (except Honorary Members who shall pay no dues unless they wish to make a voluntary contribution) shall be 10c per member per year, which shall be payable in advance on St. Vincent's Day.

2. If the annual dues of any member shall remain unpaid for one year, he may be dropped from membership at the discretion of the Council after notice requesting the payment of such dues as shall be in arrears.

IX.

Medal of the Order:

The medal of the Order shall be in such form as shall be from time to time adopted by the Council, and shall be issued to all members upon payment of such charge as shall be from time to time determined by the Secretary-General and Treasurer. In the event of the termination of any membership, the medal of the member terminating his membership shall be returned to the Secretary-General and the member returning the medal shall be entitled to receive any sum theretofore paid by him for the medal.

X.

Reports:

Every Parochial Chapter shall send a report to the Secretary-General on or before the 15th day of January of each year. All individuals not connected with a Chapter shall report to the Secretary-General on or before the 15th day of January of each year.

XI.

Annual Corporate Communion:

There shall be an annual Corporate Communion of the Order within the Octave of the Feast of St. Vincent, when every member of the Order shall receive the Holy Communion.

XII.

The Council may, at its discretion, organize a membership corporation under the laws of any State of the United States of America for the purpose of more effectively carrying out the business details of the Order. If such corporation be organized, all money and other assets of the Order may be transferred to such corporation, and the expenses of the organization thereof paid thereout. The trustees or directors of any such corporation shall be the members of the Council, and every member of the Order shall become a member of such corporation.